

better able to maintain their prominent positions in the global marketplace.

I also want to thank Presidential Emergency Board Chairman Robert Harris and the other

members of the panel, Helen Witt and Anthony Sinicropi, for their dedication and hard work. This settlement would not have been possible without their leadership and oversight.

Statement on Senate Action on Narcotics Certification for Mexico

March 20, 1997

I welcome the Senate action endorsing greater cooperation with Mexico and other nations in our hemisphere in the common fight against the scourge of drugs. The resolution approved today represents bipartisan cooperation at its best. Senators reached across the aisle in a way that supports our work with Mexico to keep illegal narcotics out of America's neighborhoods and away from our children.

The Senate and I share a common goal: We both want to improve cooperation with Mexico, Latin America, and the Caribbean in the fight against drugs. I certified Mexico because of the unprecedented level of counternarcotics cooperation we have achieved in the last year and because of the positive steps Mexico has taken on its own to fight drug trafficking. But as I said when I made that decision, much more

needs to be done by everyone in this battle. This certification reinforces our ongoing efforts and will foster increased U.S.-Mexico cooperation and strengthen Mexico's own antidrug initiatives. This approach, not confrontation, is the right way to get the results we all want.

The Senate's resolution adopts a clear stand that will support our efforts. It also makes a constructive contribution by emphasizing that solving the problem of drugs requires work on both sides of the border. For example, the bill requires reporting on steps that my administration is taking, such as strengthening border enforcement and improving antidrug education for our youth. I welcome the Senate's farsighted approach, and I urge the House to take up this bill and pass it as quickly as possible.

Statement on the Anniversary of the Sarin Gas Attack in Tokyo, Japan

March 20, 1997

Two years ago terrorists launched a cowardly chemical attack in Tokyo's subways that took 12 lives and injured thousands more. Today we join with the people of Japan in remembering their pain and loss.

This tragic anniversary also reminds us that we must do everything possible to protect Americans from the threat of a similar terrorist outrage. That includes ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention, a step that Japan's Diet took within a month of the attack in Tokyo. And just this week, the treaty was submitted to Russia's Duma for ratification. We still have not ratified. It would be harmful to our national interests if the United States, which led the way in developing this treaty, was on the out-

side, not the inside, when it comes into operation on April 29.

The Chemical Weapons Convention will help to thwart chemical terrorists in several important ways. It will eliminate their largest potential source of chemical weapons by mandating the destruction of existing chemical weapon stockpiles. It will make it more difficult for terrorists to gain access to chemicals that can be used to make chemical weapons. It will tie the United States into a global intelligence and information network that can help provide early warning of terrorist plans for a chemical attack. It will give our law enforcement new authority at home to investigate and prosecute anyone seeking to acquire chemical weapons or to use them against innocent civilians.

Just as no law prevents every crime, no treaty is foolproof. But the Chemical Weapons Convention will help make our citizens more secure. It will also help protect our soldiers by requiring member nations to destroy their chemical weapons, a step that we are already taking under U.S. law.

These overwhelming benefits explain why America's military leaders and Presidents of both

parties have strongly supported the ratification of this treaty. As we remember the terrible toll that sarin gas took in Tokyo 2 years ago, I urge the Senate to help protect our citizens and soldiers and strengthen our fight against terror by ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention now.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Dinner Hosted by President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland in Helsinki March 20, 1997

Summit With President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Q. President Clinton, what are the prospects for common ground on this NATO issue?

The President. I'm looking forward to the meeting. I think we'll work something out; I hope we will. We have had 11 meetings. We've worked hard together, and I'm glad to see President Yeltsin looking so fit and well.

Q. How are you doing, President Clinton?
The President. Great.

NOTE: The exchange began at 7:05 p.m. in the Yellow Room at the Presidential Palace. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters on Greeting President Boris Yeltsin of Russia and President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland in Helsinki March 21, 1997

Helsinki Summit

Q. Mr. President, do you expect to be able to find a way to agree to disagree with President Yeltsin on NATO expansion?

President Clinton. I think we'll have a good meeting. And we'll have a press conference this afternoon to answer your questions.

Q. Do you expect any surprises?

President Yeltsin. During the discussions there may be some surprises, but I'm confident that we'll be able to find a way out, a solution out of these surprises. We have a good will to try to accommodate each other and remove all the disagreements that we still have today. And we grow convinced that our most ardent desire—and then we know that skeptics in the past

have always proved that wrong, saying that it's not possible to reach agreement on an issue; in the final analysis we did come to agreement on most thorny issues. And the two Presidents, heads of the two great powers, are duty bound to act in this way. And I think Bill would agree with me that each of us will be prepared to cover his own part of the way.

NOTE: The exchange began at 9:38 a.m. at Mantyniemi, the residence of President Ahtisaari. President Yeltsin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.